CALIBER COMICS

ISSUE 42

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NEGATIVE BURN

CAMERON BATTY

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MARTIN CONAGHAN

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JESSE HAMM

FRED HARPER

STEFAN JACKSON

DARKO MACAN

JOHN McCREA

JASON MILLER

R.J. PENTZELL

MIKE PERKINS

GORDON PURCELL

JOHN TOMLINSON

DANIJEL ZEZELJ

TREMENDO★INCREDIBLE ★AWESOME

64 PAGES

Joe Pruett / Editor
VOLUME ONE • NUMBER FORTY-TWO

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written and illustrated by Brian Bolland

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lettering by Galen Showman

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and Cameron B. Batty

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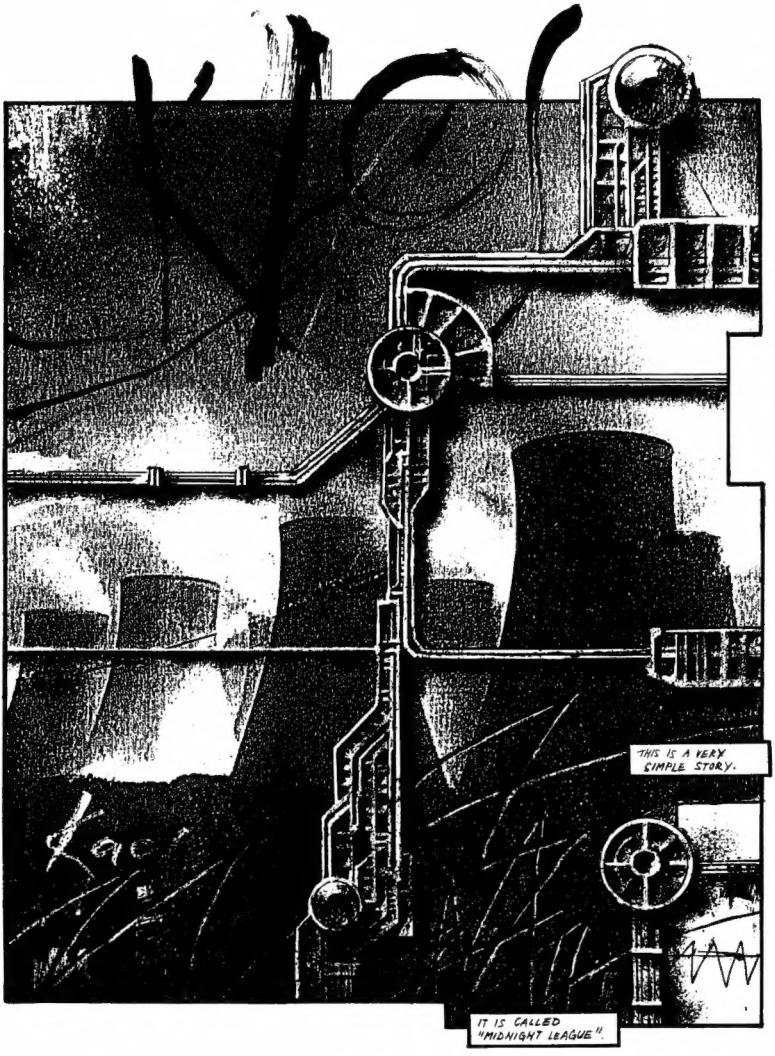
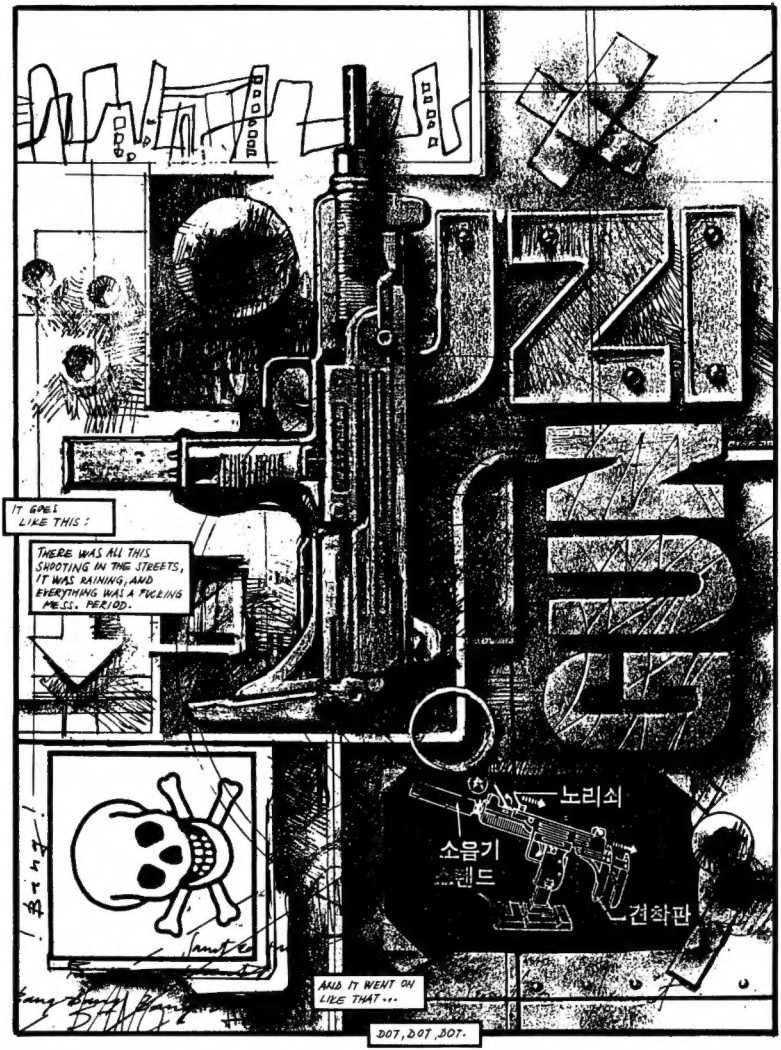
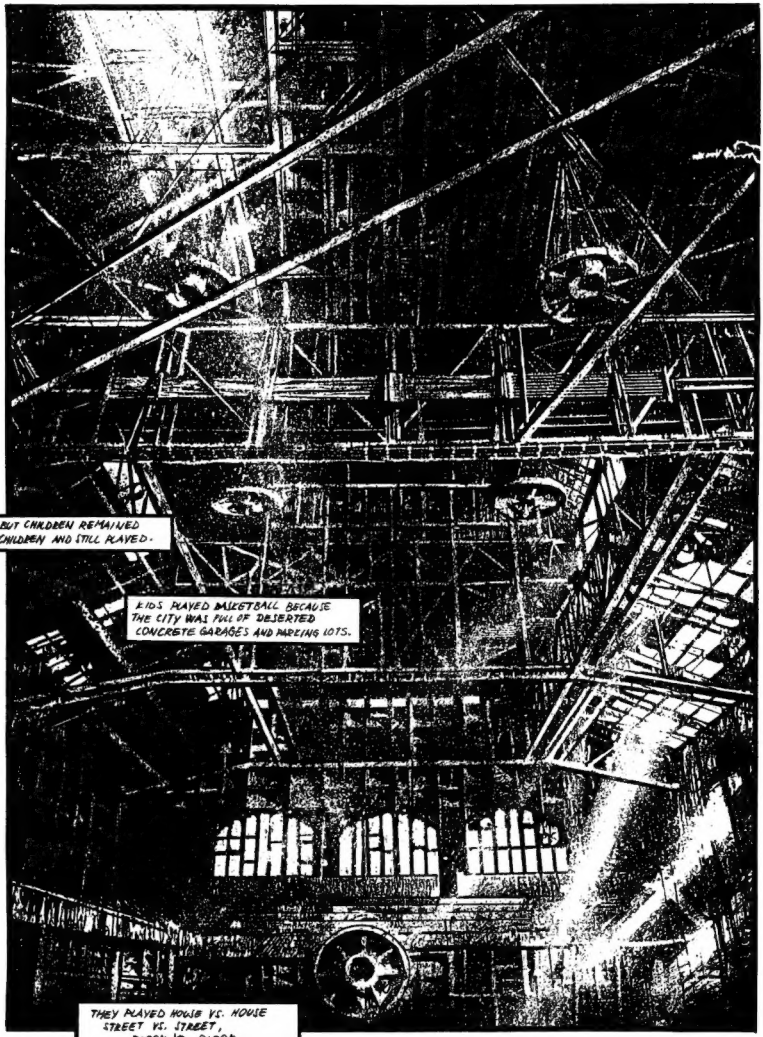
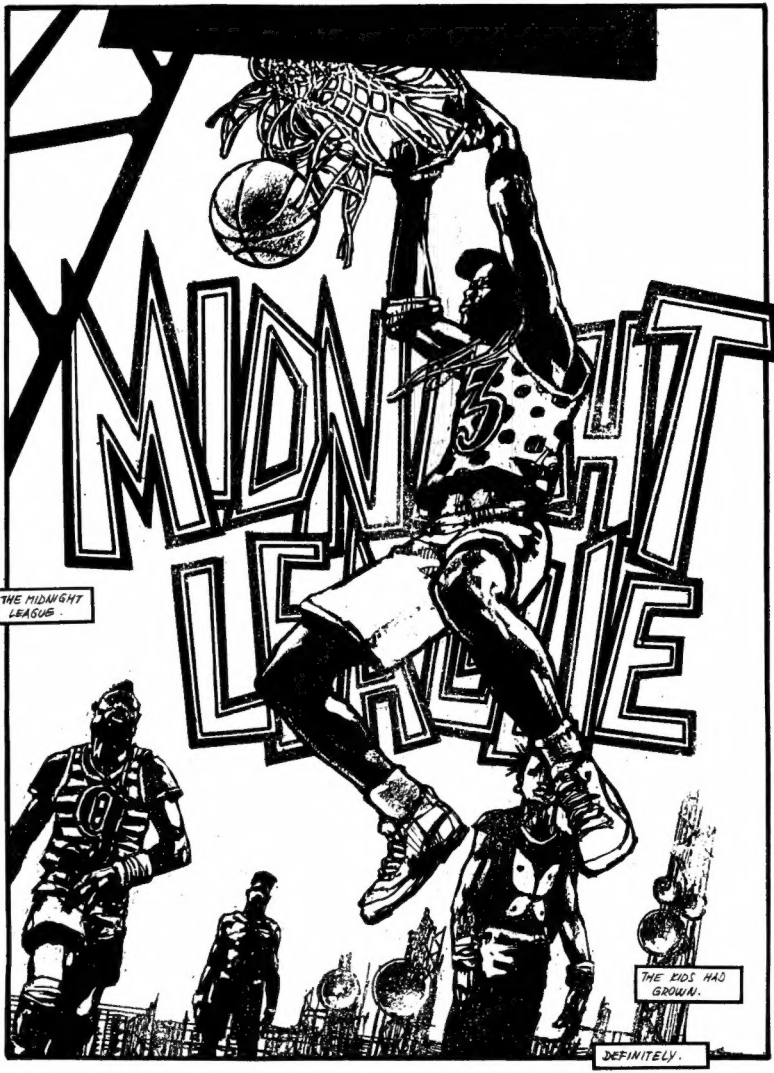

THIS IS A VERY SIMPLE STORY.
IT IS CALLED "MIDNIGHT LEAGUE".


UZI
IT GOES LIKE THIS:
THERE WAS ALL THIS SHOOTING IN THE STREETS, IT WAS RAINING, AND EVERYTHING WAS A FUCKING MESS. PERIOD.
노리쇠
소음기
스톡
견착판
AND IT WENT ON LIKE THAT...
DOT, DOT, DOT.

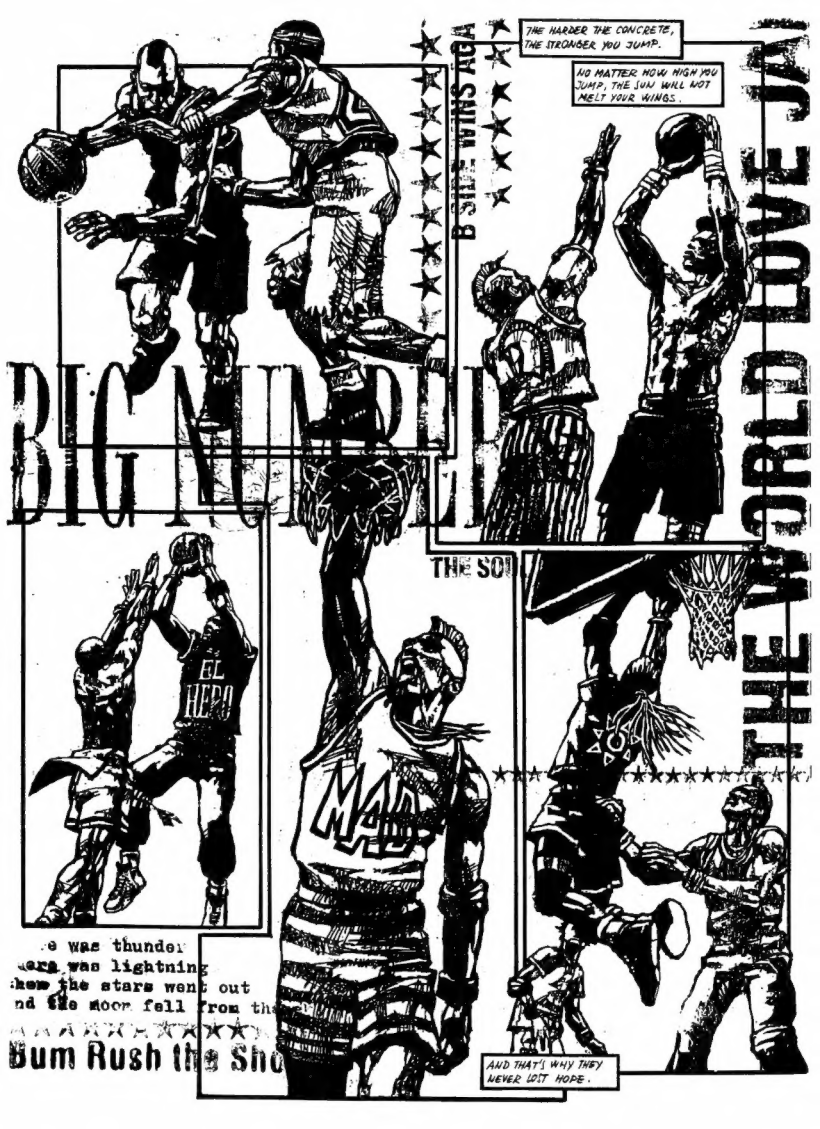

BUT CHILDREN REMAINED CHILDREN AND STILL PLAYED.
KIDS PLAYED BASKETBALL BECAUSE THE CITY WAS FULL OF DESERTED CONCRETE GARAGES AND PARKING LOTS.
THEY PLAYED HOUSE VS. HOUSE STREET VS. STREET, BLOCK VS. BLOCK.

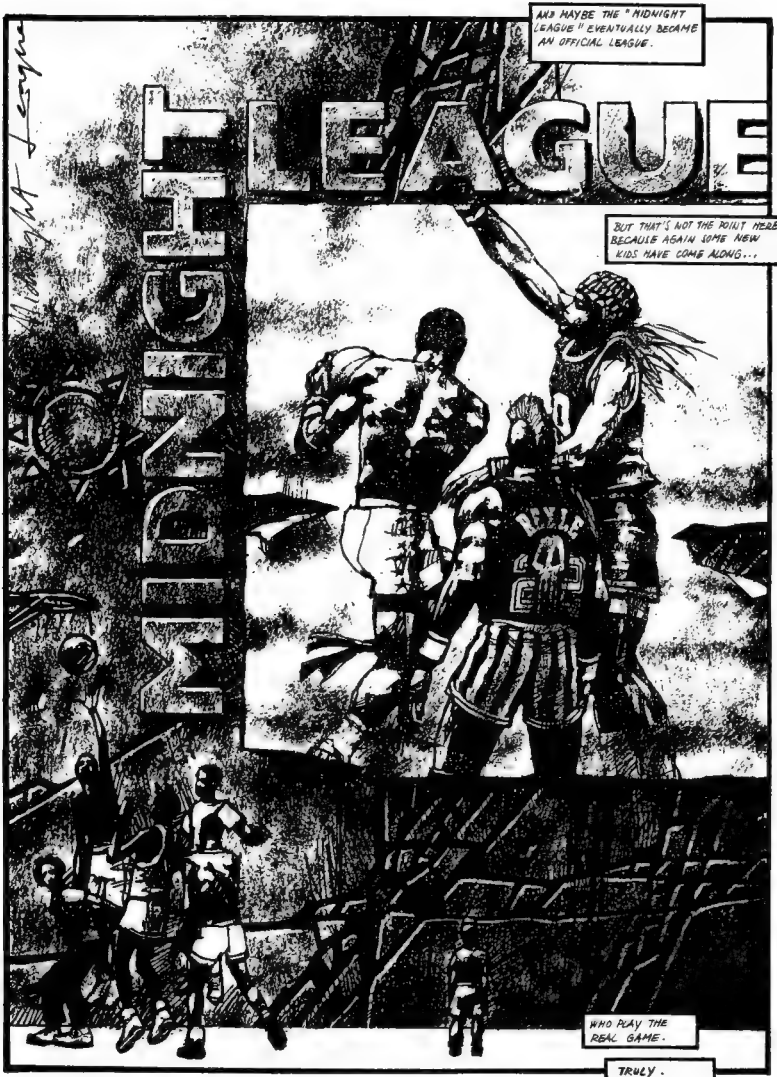
THE KIDS GREW AND JUMPED HIGHER & HIGHER.
SOME STRONG TEAMS WERE FORMED. THERE WERE 27 TEAMS AND THEY MANAGED TO GET NETS FOR THE HOOPS.
moonwalkers
cool cats
heartbreakers
los lobos
gold queens
butterflies
mad dogs
big numbers
kamikaze hearts
iguanas
hat hat jabas
aficionados
aztecs
red pilots
voodoo kings
desperados
bruisers
nine lives
terminators
blue elephants
brothers
road runners
fat skiers
blazers
tiger tigers
pain killers
caesars
27
AND THUS WAS CREATED...


MIDNIGHT
LEAGUE
THE MIDNIGHT LEAGUE.
THE KIDS HAD GROWN.
DEFINITELY.

play play play
Rum Rush the Show
THEY JUMPED EVEN HIGHER...
AND HIGHER...
POWER & FREEDOM
AND HIGHER...

FINAL C
AND BECAME SERIOUS PLAYERS.
WILD DREAMS
hot air cold grou
BUT IN THEIR SOULS THEY REMAINED THE SAME OLD KIDS.
BECAUSE THEY LEARNED THEIR LESSON WELL ...
AND NEVER FORGOT...


THE HARDER THE CONCRETE, THE STRONGER YOU JUMP.
NO MATTER HOW HIGH YOU JUMP, THE SUN WILL NOT MELT YOUR WINGS.
BIG NUMBER
THE SOU
THE WORLD LOVE JA
B SIDE WINS AGA
EL HERO
MAD
e was thunder
ers was lightning
hen the stars went out
nd the moon fell from th
Bum Rush the Sho
AND THAT'S WHY THEY NEVER LOST HOPE.


AND MAYBE THE "MIDNIGHT LEAGUE" EVENTUALLY BECAME AN OFFICIAL LEAGUE.
LEAGUE
BUT THAT'S NOT THE POINT HERE, BECAUSE AGAIN SOME NEW KIDS HAVE COME ALONG...
MIDNIGHT
WHO PLAY THE REAL GAME.
TRULY.

FORBIDDEN RADIOTS
fly fly fly fly fly fly
play play play
R & FREEDOM
SO, REMEMBER, BROTHER ...
YOU MUST ALWAYS HAVE IRON IN THE FIRE.
DAY FOLLOWS NIGHT.
AND THERE IS ALWAYS LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL.
PERIOD.
fly fly fly fly fly fly fly fly fly fly fly fly

THE END

MR. MAMOULIAN
THE TIME IN CARACAS

49 89 BOLLAND 45

WOULD YOU LIKE TO KNOW THE TIME IN CARAKAS ?
WHAT ?
IN CARACAS IT IS PRECISELY 9·25 AND 47 SECONDS A.M... IN RIO DE JANEIRO IT IS 10·26 AND 6 SECONDS A.M... IN MOSCOW IT IS 4·26 AND 27 SECONDS P.M... IN BANGKOK IT IS 8·26 AND 50 SECONDS P.M.
THANK YOU.
MY WATCH HAS 17 OTHER FUNCTIONS. I HAVE MY PERSONAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS AND ALL OF MY APPOINTMENTS STORED IN ITS 100 PAGE MEMORY. FOR INSTANCE BY PRESSING THIS BUTTON I SEE I HAVE AN APPOINTMENT WITH MY FATHER TOMORROW EVENING AT 8·30.
MY NAME IS GULLIVER BUMBERY-FLUFFTON. MY FRIENDS CALL ME FLUFFTON. I HAVE A HANDY PORTABLE COMPUTER IN MY BRIEFCASE. MY FATHER GAVE IT TO ME. DO YOU HAVE ONE ?
ER, NO.
I'M VERY CLEVER YOU KNOW. MY MATH TEACHER MR. CAWTHORNE SAYS SO. I'LL BE GOING TO CAMBRIDGE IN DUE COURSE. WHAT IS YOUR NAME AND INITIAL?
MAMOULIAN, X.
OR OXFORD.
THAT'S M-A-M-O-U-L-I-A-N. ARMENIAN, JEWISH PROBABLY. AH, I SEE THAT YOU BANK AT LLOYDS. YOU HAVE £324·17 IN YOUR CURRENT ACCOUNT AND £2622·54 INVESTED AT 8·5%. YOU REALLY OUGHT TO THINK ABOUT MOVING THAT TO SOMEWHERE MORE SENSIBLE.
MY SISTER IPHIGENIA IS THERE ALREADY. CAMBRIDGE THAT IS. SHE'S READING ANCIENT GREEK AND SEMIOTICS. WHAT DO YOU DO, MR. MAMOULIAN ?
I'M A FAMOUS ASTRONAUT AND CHILD MURDERER.
REALLY, MY FATHER IS A STOCK BROKER.
MMMM. IT SAYS HERE YOU HAVE THREE FALSE TEETH, A RECURRING KIDNEY PROBLEM, AND ONE CONVICTION FOR CYCLING ON THE PAVEMENT. I WENT TO CARACAS WITH MY PARENTS LAST YEAR. IT'S IN VENEZUELA YOU KNOW... HMMM THAT'S INTERESTING...
IT SEEMS MIS HAVE A SECRET FILE ON YOU. I'LL HAVE TO CONSULT MY SPECIAL TOP SECRET CODE BOOK.
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP
AH, I HAVE TO GO.
?
MY FATHER WILL HAVE FINISHED HIS PRIVATE MEETING WITH HIS SECRETARY MISS BTORCK. HE PICKS ME UP HERE EVERY WEDNESDAY AFTER THE MEETING. HE DRIVES A B.M.W. YOU KNOW. IT'S BEEN PLEASANT MEETING YOU. GOODBYE.

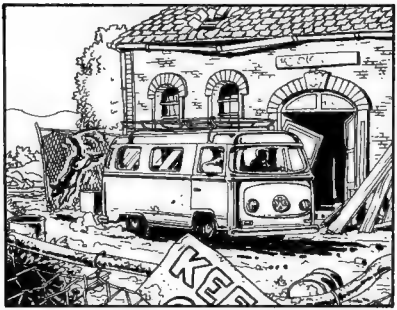
MY NAME IS LEONARD STEIN AND I'M A HOT SHOT OVER AT GEMINI PROJECT--
AND THIS IS RIP BESIDE ME.
Voodoo Blues
STORY BY: DARKO MACAN
ART BY: EDVIN BIUKOVIC'
AND THE OTHER GUY IS FROM THE PROJECT'S SECURITY
OUR BOSSES HAVE A FUNNY NOTION THAT WE CAN'T TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES
EVENING, PROFESSOR! WHAT'S IT GONNA BE? THE USUAL?
© DARKO MACAN & EDVIN BIUKOVIC '90.

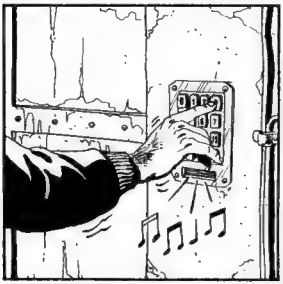
BE CAREFUL NOT TO SCALD YOUR TONGUE, PROFESSOR!
IF YOU HAVE ONE!
MAYBE I SHOULDN'T BE OUT AT NIGHT, BUT CANTINA FOOD IS NEVER SPICY ENOUGH!
THANKS, PROFESSOR! DO COME AGAIN!
HEY, OUR GUARDIAN ANGEL KEEPS GETTING BETTER

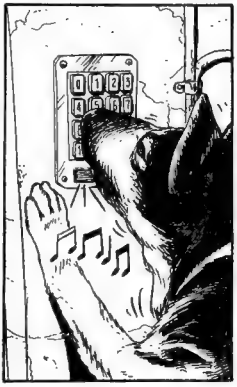
CLIC
NICE EVENING, AIN'T IT SO, PROF?
STEADY, RIP
IT'S FULL OF STARS..
-- AIN'T IT SO?
LOOK AT THE BRAVE DOG! HA HA HA!

TODAY
ED

DID YOU HEAR THAT? SOMETHING HIT THE TOP!
BAH! IT'S PROBABLY JUST THIS VAN FALLING APART!
TURN RIGHT HERE! ALMOST HOME!







WHA--?!

WOOF!
LET'S GO HOME, RIP!
GEMINI IS A MIND-SWAP PROJECT.
I'VE HAD TO TRY IT ON MYSELF FIRST.
6
© DARKO MACAN & EDVIN BIUKOVIC '90.

THE SQUAB HEAD INCIDENT!

A 100% TRUE STORY by GORDON PURCELL and PAUL FRICKE

FEATURING:
ALEX ROSS
ANDREW PEPOY
GORDON PURCELL
LEN STRAZEWSKI
and JERRY MATHERS as the SQUAB HEAD!
1994 PRO CON OAKLAND CA JADE PALACE
THIS WAY TO YOUR TABLE, PLEASE....
I'LL HAVE THE LAKE TUNG TING SHRIMP.
Hmmm..
--SO MANY HOLLYWOOD KINDA PANELS! WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH COMICS?!
WHAT'S SQUAB?
I THINK IT'S PIDGEON.

...THE VEGETABLE FRIED RICE.
I'M SURE IT TASTES JUST LIKE CHICKEN!
I'LL HAVE THE SQUAB HEAD SOUP AND THE MOO GOO GAI PAN.
JSA? BREAK MY HEART.
YOUR SOUP, SIR.
..DIDN'T HAVE THE RIGHT DEMOGRAPHICS..
..NOT ENOUGH GIMMICKS FOR THE SPECULATORS...
..DON'T THOSE DIMWITS REALIZE SPECULATORS DON'T READ?!
...THEY'RE GONNA GET BORED AND LEAVE...
...PAH! DEAD INDUSTRY.

WHAT'S THAT?
I DUNNO...
...I GUESS IT'S THE SQUAB HEAD!
DEAD INDUSTRY
DEAD
DEAD IND
TRY
Oh, WELL....
CHOMP
THE END!

W-WHAT WAS THAT YOU SAID JUST NOW?
A LITTLE DEATH. THAT'S WHAT THEY USED TO CALL *ORGASM*, WASN'T IT?
WENDY ARDEN WAS SUB-EDITOR ON A LOCAL PAPER, 'THE HIGHGATE HERALD.'

YOU *WHAT*? GOD, YOU SILVER-TONGUED CHARMER. WHY DON'T YOU JUST YELL '*MOTHER!*' NEXT TIME, AND *REALLY* KILL THE PASSION?
THAT YEAR I WAS JUST GETTING STARTED AS A FREELANCE REPORTER. WE'D BEEN DANCING AROUND EACH OTHER FOR MONTHS, BUT THAT NIGHT WE FINALLY CLICKED.

THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE

WRITER - *JOHN TOMLINSON*

ARTIST - *MIKE PERKINS*

LETTERER - *ROXANNE STARR*

I ALWAYS TURN INTO A CORNBALL WHEN I'M IN LOVE. NEXT MORNING, WENDY STILL SLEEPING, I DECIDED I'D MAKE BREAKFAST FOR HER.
CRASSONTS
CULLE
PINT
25P
BREAKFAST AT MY PLACE WAS A MUG OF TEPID COFFEE AND A GOOD FART. I WANTED TO MAKE THIS MORNING SPECIAL.
CROYSONT'S CWASSONTS...
CROISSANTS, YEAH... BET SHE LOVES 'EM. HELL, I BET SHE CAN EVEN PRONOUNCE IT...
CHAMPAGNE? NAHH... DON'T WANT TO OVERDO IT. ORANGE JUICE THOUGH, DEFINITELY...
FIVE MINUTES OUT OF BED AND ALREADY I WAS MISSING HER. SOPPY BASTARD.
IT WAS ALL GOING TO BE GREAT, I KNEW IT. JUST NEEDED SOMETHING EXTRA - SOMETHING JUST A TAD WEIRD AND EXOTIC...
CABANOS SAUSAGE, YEAH. SHE'D BE WELL IMPRESSED.
I LEFT THE SUPERMARKET. WHICH WAS ABOUT WHEN EVERYTHING BEGAN TO GO VERY BADLY WRONG.
OH SHIII!
LAST NIGHT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D BEEN HERE. WHICH HOUSE WAS HERS?
WHERE DID SHE BLOODY LIVE?

THINK. THINK. IT'S DEFINITELY ON THE LEFT-SIDE OF THE ROAD, ABOUT HALF-WAY UP. AND YOU-'VE GOT THE KEY.
IT'S EASY. JUST A SIMPLE PROCESS OF ELIMINATION.
SHUK
IT WAS EASIER THAN I THOUGHT. THE DOOR OPENED BEFORE I HAD TIME TO TURN THE KEY.
YEAH? WOT? WHERE JOO GET THAT KEY?
HATE
BRITISH
YOU FROM RAYJO RENTALS? EH? CUZ IF YOU TRY TAKIN' THE VIDEO AGAIN, I'LL STRAIN IT FROO YER FAKKIN' TEEF!
M-MER- MY MISTAKE, SORRY.
UH - HI!
LOOK LOVE, MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME.
DO YOU KNOW A LADY ROUND HERE CALLED WENDY? I NEED TO KNOW WHERE SHE LI-
OH! OH RIGHT, THANKS...

KRRR-EEK
WAS IT HERS, THOUGH? I MEAN, IT HAD BEEN DARK, AND WE WEREN'T EXACTLY STUDING THE BLOODY WALLPAPER. THESE OLD PLACES ALL LOOK THE SAME...
GOD. IF IT WAS THE WRONG HOUSE AND I WALKED INTO SOMEONE'S BEDROOM I'D JUST HAVE TO COMMIT HARI-KIRI THERE AND THEN.
THEN I HEARD THE SOUND OF A RADIO FROM THE BATHROOM AND I JUST KNEW THAT WAS WHERE SHE'D BE.
MAYBE BREAKFAST COULD WAIT..
THE MAN'S NECK GAPED LIKE A PINK SMILE OR A SILENT SCREAM. HIS SKIN WAS WRINKLED AND WAXY AROUND THE STILL WATERLINE.
K KK

A SCREAM WELLED IN MY THROAT THAT WAS STRANGLED AT BIRTH. IN TORTUOUS SLOW MOTION I BEGAN TO RUN.
OH FU- OH FU-
(THAT CUPBOARD WASN'T OPEN WHEN I-)
WELL, I HAD TO. HE WAS FARTING. IN THE BATH! IT'S JUST NOT MANNERS, IS IT?
SLAMM
MEN MAKE SUCH DIRTY NOISES, DON'T YOU THINK?
WELL, DON'T YOUUU?

THE POLICE NEVER FOUND HER.
THEY NEVER FOUND THE MAN'S BODY, EITHER, THOUGH THEY SEARCHED EVERY HOUSE ON THE STREET. IN MY PANIC, I'D FORGOTTEN THE ADDRESS OF THAT ONE, TOO.
A-HUH A-HUH
FAR TOO LATE, I REMEMBERED THAT WENDY'S HOUSE HAD STONE PINEAPPLES ON THE GATEPOSTS.
NO LITTLE GIRL MATCHING MY DESCRIPTION OF THE ONE I'D SEEN LIVED ANYWHERE NEARBY. IN TIME, I CAME TO THINK OF THE WHOLE INCIDENT AS SOME BIZARRE WAKING *NIGHTMARE*.
MORNING JOG, HMMM?
THEN THERE WAS *WENDY*
BUT EVEN AS I CLUNG TO HER FOR DEAR LIFE, I COULDN'T HELP BUT WONDER A-BOUT A CERTAIN DISCARDED SHOPPING BAG...
AND IF PSYCHO-BITCH BAG LADIES LIKED CABANOS SAUSAGE FOR BREAKFAST.

NAME (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)...

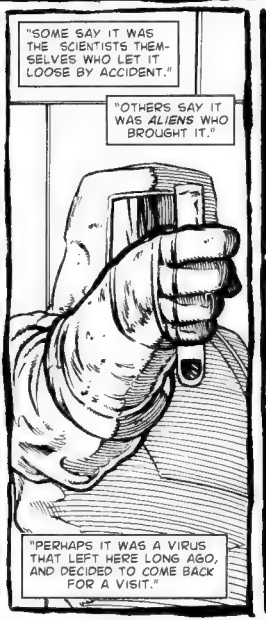
I GET THE FEELING THAT I'M GOING THROUGH LIFE A STATISTICAL CIPHER, AN ANONYMOUS NON-ENTITY, SEEN ANYWHERE, KNOWN NOWHERE.
I DON'T KNOW YOUR NAME, BUT YOUR PACE IS FAMILIAR.
CAN'T PLACE THE NAME, BUT YOUR FEZ IS FAMILIAR.
I MAY HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR NAME, BUT YOUR FAITH IS FAMILIAR.
I KNOW NOT YOUR NAME, BUT YOUR FATE IS FAMILIAR.
NOBODY CARES WHO I REALLY AM. I'M JUST A... A FACE IN THE CROWD.
I DIDN'T CATCH THE NAME, BUT YOUR PHRASE IS FAMILIAR.
R.J. Pentzell

ARE YOU GOING TO HELP US?
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HELP US!!
...YOU'RE SUPPOSED... TO... PRESERVE ...LIFE...
AND I'M HERE TO END IT.
BOOM!
"I DON'T THINK WE CAN REPAIR HIM."

THE BRUTALIZERS
Part Five: THE PRESERVER
HE LOOKS PRETTY MESSED UP TO ME.
I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT HALF OF THIS STUFF IS. IT LOOKS REALLY COMPLICATED.
I CAN'T BELIEVE HE ACTUALLY CAME BACK.
HE CAME BACK JUST TO HELP US.
THIS IS TOO MUCH FOR ME. I MEAN, I'VE PATCHED UP OLD RADIOS AND TV'S--BUT THIS STUFF IS TOTALLY ALIEN TO ME. I DON'T THINK WE'LL EVER SEE HIM RUNNING AGAIN.
WHAT IS HE ANYWAY?
HE'S A PRESERVER.
RANDALL--COME IN, WE DIDN'T SEE YOU STANDING THERE.
HE CAME BACK BECAUSE THAT'S HIS JOB. THAT'S WHAT HE WAS BUILT TO DO.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THIS, RANDALL?
I MET ONE OF HIS KIND BEFORE --HE SAVED MY LIFE WHEN I WAS A BOY.
"THEY WERE CALLED PRESERVERS."
"THE SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS OF LONG AGO CREATED THEM TO TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES IF THE GREAT WAR EVER CAME."

"BUT THE GREAT WAR NEVER CAME."
"THE VIRUS CAME INSTEAD."


"SOME SAY IT WAS THE SCIENTISTS THEMSELVES WHO LET IT LOOSE BY ACCIDENT."
"OTHERS SAY IT WAS ALIENS WHO BROUGHT IT."
"PERHAPS IT WAS A VIRUS THAT LEFT HERE LONG AGO, AND DECIDED TO COME BACK FOR A VISIT."

BUT I SAY IT WAS DOWN TO MOTHER NATURE--GETTING OLD AND SENILE--SHE SIMPLY MADE A MESS AND FORGOT TO CLEAN IT UP.

"THE PRESERVERS WERE PROGRAMED WITH KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WHICH WOULD BE REQUIRED TO REBUILD THE WORLD--ENGINEERING, ELECTRONICS, FARMING--THAT SORT OF THING."
"ALL IN PREPARATION FOR THE DAY OF THE GREAT WAR."
"BUT THE WAR NEVER HAPPENED, AND THE VIRUS CAME, KILLING JUST ABOUT EVERYBODY."
"--AND SOMEHOW THEY GOT ACTIVATED ANYWAY."
"THEY WANDERED AROUND WITHOUT MUCH PURPOSE--MAINLY HELPING OUT FOLKS THAT WERE LEFT IN ANY WAY THEY COULD."
"MOST OF THEM MAL-FUNCTIONED OR GOT KILLED--BUT SOME OF THEM JUST KEPT RIGHT ON DOING THEIR JOB, NEVER REALLY KNOWING WHY."
LIKE THE ONE I MET--AND THIS ONE.
THE ONE I SAW GAVE ME HIS BADGE. IT CONTAINS A HIDDEN COMPARTMENT WITH DETAILED INFORMATION AND PLANS ON THE WORKINGS OF EACH PRESERVER.
--IT SHOULD HELP YOU PIECE HIM TOGETHER.

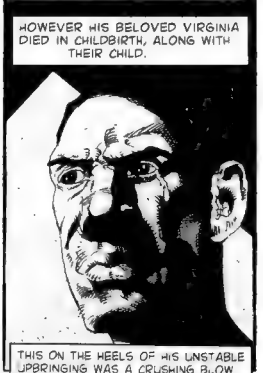
I HOPE THIS WORKS.
...SZZ...ZZ. SSSSS.
..HRMM...SZZ. IHMM--HMM... I'M...ALIVE.

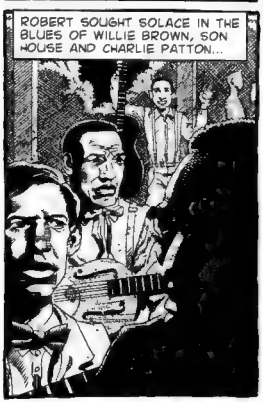
I THINK I UNDERSTAND NOW--I HAVE SUCESSFULLY RETRIEVED MUCH OF MY CORE MEMORY WHICH CHRONICLES THE MISSING AREAS OF MY PAST.
WE DIDN'T THINK WE COULD FIX YOU UP--UNTIL RANDALL GAVE US THE BADGE CONTAINING THE PLANS THE BRUTALIZERS MESSED YOU UP REAL BAD.
YES--IT WOULD ALSO SEEM THAT I'VE MET WITH THEIR LEADER BEFORE.
WITH A SIMILAR OUTCOME.
SOMEONE MUST HAVE REPAIRED YOU THE WAY WE HAVE--THERE'S LOTS OF SCARS ON YOUR BODY.
YOU PEOPLE ARE KIND AND I OWE IT TO YOU TO RID THESE PARTS OF THE BRUTALIZERS--OR PERISH TRYING.
End of Part Five
Next: "THE END"

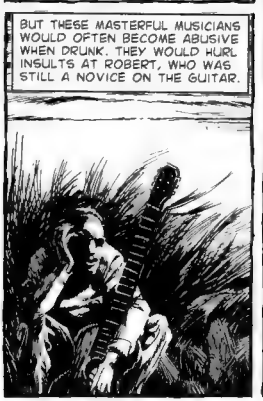
Robert Johnson

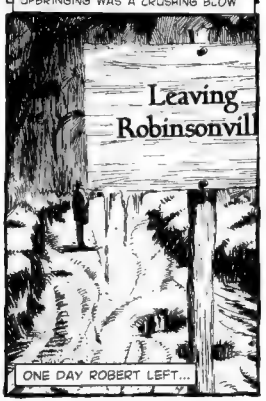
ROBERT JOHNSON WAS BORN ON MAY 8, 1911 IN HAZELHURST, MISSISSIPPI.
DURING A CONFUSED CHILDHOOD, HE HAD A SUCCESSION OF SUDDEN UPROOTINGS AND THREE "FATHERS" BY THE TIME HE WAS SEVEN.

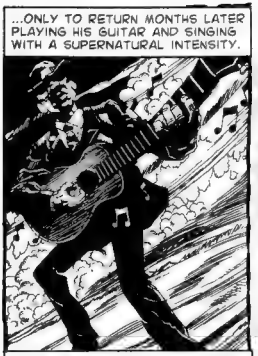
ROBERT CHOSE THE SURNAME "JOHNSON" BY THE TIME HE WAS ATTRACTED TO THE BLUES AS A YOUNG MAN.
ROBERT LEARNED TO PLAY THE HARMONICA FAIRLY WELL, BUT HIS TRUE PASSION WAS THE GUITAR.


HOWEVER HIS BELOVED VIRGINIA DIED IN CHILDBIRTH, ALONG WITH THEIR CHILD.
THIS ON THE HEELS OF HIS UNSTABLE UPBRINGING WAS A CRUSHING BLOW




BUT THESE MASTERFUL MUSICIANS WOULD OFTEN BECOME ABUSIVE WHEN DRUNK. THEY WOULD HURL INSULTS AT ROBERT, WHO WAS STILL A NOVICE ON THE GUITAR.



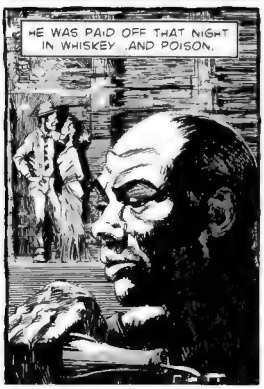

...ONLY TO RETURN MONTHS LATER PLAYING HIS GUITAR AND SINGING WITH A SUPERNATURAL INTENSITY.
MANY WONDERED HOW THIS FANTASTIC TRANSFORMATION HAD OCCURRED.

SOME CLAIMED THAT JOHNSON HAD GONE DOWN TO A CROSSROADS IN A DESERTED PART OF THE DELTA.
THERE ARE FEW PLACES MORE LONESOME ON EARTH.

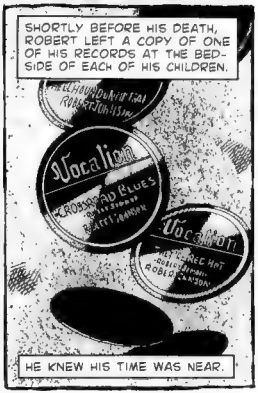
HERE, HE SIGNED A DEAL WITH PAPA LEGBA, THE DEVIL.
IN RETURN FOR HIS TALENT, JOHNSON WOULD PAY WITH HIS LIFE AFTER JUST EIGHT MORE YEARS.

FOR MOST OF THOSE EIGHT YEARS, ROBERT WAS SEIZED BY A GREAT WANDERLUST. HE RAMBLED FROM THE DELTA, TO CHICAGO, TO TEXAS, TO NEW YORK, AND ON.
THERE SEEMED TO BE A HELLHOUND ON HIS TRAIL.

JOHNSON LIKED WOMEN, ESPECIALLY THE MARRIED KIND. IN AUGUST, 1938, JOHNSON FLIRTED WITH HIS EMPLOYER'S WIFE.


HE WAS PAID OFF THAT NIGHT IN WHISKEY AND POISON.

FOR DAYS JOHNSON CRAWLED ABOUT IN PAIN AND HOWLED LIKE A DOG.
HE DIED ON AUGUST 16, 1938.


SHORTLY BEFORE HIS DEATH, ROBERT LEFT A COPY OF ONE OF HIS RECORDS AT THE BEDSIDE OF EACH OF HIS CHILDREN.
HE KNEW HIS TIME WAS NEAR.

ROBERT JOHNSON WAS BURIED IN A GRAVEYARD JUST OFF HIGHWAY 7.
YOU MAY BURY MY BODY DOWN BY THE HIGHWAY SIDE, SO MY OLD EVIL SPIRIT CAN CATCH A GREYHOUND BUS AND RIDE"
- ME AND THE DEVIL BLUES

ONE NIGHT at DIRTY BLONDE BARRY'S PLACE

DEALER TAKES TWO. STILL YOUR BET, SYDNEY.
TWENTY.
I'M IN.
GOOD!
MORE MONEY FOR ME!
THIS ONE BELONGS TO ME, FRIEND.
ALL TALK, NO SHOW. I BUMP IT TWENTY-FIVE.

I'M OUT.
SHOWTIME!
HEART FLUSH WITH THE LADY RIDE'N HIGH.
KNOCK KNOCK
AIN'T THAT SOME SHIT!
FFFUCK ME.
HEH HEH
YOUR LADY'S NOT PRETTY ENOUGH.
BOUT TIME YOU WON A HAND.
YOU WANT A DRINK?

HE DON'T WANT NO DRINK, WENCH! NOW STEP AWAY - ALL YOU JUST STEP AWAY FROM THE TABLE!
DON'T WANT NONE OF YOU TO CATCH THE SPRAY OF HOT BUCKSHOT!
FUCK ME!
THAT AIN'T NO MAN ... THAT'S A SON OF THE DEVIL!
CHEERS!
4

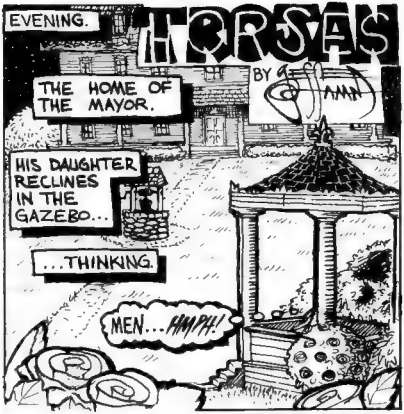
HE CAME TO OUR PLACE ABOUT A WEEK PAST. HE LOOKED SICK, SO WE LET HIM STAY IN THE BARN.
NEXT MORNIN. I FOUND MY HORSE DEAD, MY DOG WAS DEAD... OH, AND MY HUSBAND WAS DEAD TOO.
ALL HAD LITTLE HOLES IN THEIR NECKS. NOT A DROP OF BLOOD LEFT IN THEIR BODIES.
SO I BURNED THEM ALL. THEN BURIED THEIR HEADS AWAY FROM THEIR BODIES.
AND RIGHT BEFORE I LEFT MY HOME, MY OTHER DOG CAME HOME, TRIED TO KILL ME! SO I KILLED HIM... BURNED AND BURIED HIM LIKE THE OTHERS.
I TRACKED HIM WERE. MY HUSBAND'S HORSE IS RIGHT OUTSIDE. I'M SURPRISED TO SEE IT ALIVE. BUT I'LL BE GLAD TO TAKE IT HOME ALL THE SAME.
KISS
YOU MONSTER I'M PUTTIN' YOU DOWN!

BLAM!
BLA
AAAAAOOOOOAARRRAAHAAAAHAHH
BLAST!
SLAP
O.K.
BLAM
BLAM
HRRMPH.
6

SIT DOWN... SIT DOWN... I'D LIKE TO PLAY ONE MORE HAND.
MISTER, YOU'RE BLEEDIN' REAL BAD! YOU NEED A DOCTOR MORE THAN A CARD GAME.
NO, I NEED BLOOD AND FLESH. THIS LAST GAME IS A MEANS TO THAT END. ONE ROUND OF HIGH CARD. LOSER BECOMES MY MEAL.
WHAT IF WE ALL BEAT YOU?
I'M BETTIN' I'LL PULL A HIGHER CARD THAN AT LEAST ONE OF YOU.
BUT IF YOU DON'T— DO WE HAVE YOUR WORD OF HONOR THAT YOU'LL LET US WALK AWAY?
YOU HAVE MY WORD... NOW DRAW.

FUCK ME.
DAMN
I LOVE THIS GAME!!
END

comics to BORE & CONFUSE YOU
DEAR FRIENDS, WE BESEECH YOU: FORGIVE LAST ISSUE'S SCANDALOUS CHARADE. YOU CAME CRAVING BOREDOM AND CONFUSION BUT INSTEAD, WE ENTERTAINED YOU. PLEASE ACCEPT OUR HUMBLEST APOLOGIES AS WE BORE YOU WITH THIS EXQUISITELY PREDICTABLE NATURE FILM FROM THE SILENT ERA.
YOURS TRULY,
FENWICK & MAW


EVENING.
HORSAS
BY
THE HOME OF THE MAYOR.
HIS DAUGHTER RECLINES IN THE GAZEBO...
...THINKING.
MEN... HMPH!

"WE DON'T PAINT NUDES"! WHAT A CREEPY LITTLE PRUDE!
I'D SAY HE WAS JUST AS BAD AS MY FATHER!

BUT ALL MEN AREN'T LIKE THAT, I'M SURE OF IT!
WHY, SOMEDAY, I'LL FIND A REAL MAN...
A MAN OF THE WORLD! AND THEN--
THEN WHAT?

OH!
NO REASON TO BE FRIGHTENED, M'LADY.
I--I WASN'T FRIGHTENED-- MERELY STARTLED
NOT TO WORRY...
THIS SHOULD CURE YOUR ILLS!
STARTLED, EH?
Mmm! I SHOULD SAY SO!
MIGHT I ASK YOUR NAME, M'LADY?
PENELOPE. AND YOURS?
OH... CALL ME LUCAS...
AND SO THEY CHAT...
AND DRINK...
MY, WHAT A CHARM
LUCAS!
A YOUNG MAN--
AND ELSEWHERE IN THE NIGHT...
HOW LONG, I WONDER, TILL THE SUPREME BEING ANSWERS MY LETTER?
I MEAN, HE PROBABLY ALREADY KNOWS WHAT IT SAYS... AFTER ALL, HE'S SUPREME!
I BET HE COULD HAVE EVEN ANSWERED IT BEFORE I EVER EVEN SENT IT!
AWAITS HIS FATE...
BUT THAT CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE BEEN CONFUSING!

MAYBE HE'S MERELY POSTPONING HIS REPLY SO THAT--
WAIT! THERE!
THAT STAR!
IT'S GROWING BIGGER!
SSHHH
AA
AAAAA
AAAAAAA
HWWAAAAH

RELINQUISH THY FEARS, PETER CLAY...
AND CONCEDE THE VICTORY AT HAND...
THE VICTORY YOU CLAIMED!
VICTORY? VICTORY OVER WHAT?
OVER THIS DARK WORLD AND THE POWERS WITHIN IT, PETER CLAY!
HOW DID YOU KNOW MY NAME IS PETER CLAY?
WAS PETER CLAY, SON OF MAN.
FOR ONCE YOU HAD BEEN PETER; PETRA; A ROCK... A PERFECT STATUE...
BUT YOU BECAME CLAY--WEAK...
... AND YOU WERE MISSHAPEN.
HOWEVER... YOU RECEIVED ME!!
SO NOW YOU ARE PETER AGAIN!
FROM CLAY TO PETER, CLAY PETER, SO REMAIN PETER AND LET US SCULPT YOU AGAIN TO PERFECTION!
...
WHO ARE YOU?
I AM THE DOVE YOU SENT...
AND ONE OF A KIND--
BUT I LEAVE ONE OF MY KIND TO GUIDE YOU.
WELCOME TO HIS MAJESTY'S SERVICE, CHILD;...
...TO THE FAMILY OF THE SUPREME!

MEANWHILE, AT THE MAYOR'S HOUSE...
--SO VERY GLAD YOU FOUND HER WHEN YOU DID, DOCTOR...
HAD ANY REPORTERS STUMBLED ACROSS MY DAUGHTER LYING STONE DRUNK IN THE STREET...
WELL, I SHIVER TO THINK OF THE HEADLINES!
I UNDERSTAND COMPLETELY, MAYOR BRADLY.
BUT NOT TO WORRY--
SHE'LL BE SOBER COME MORNING.
I WILL, HOWEVER, NEED TO REMAIN ON HAND, IN CASE OF COMPLICATIONS.
OH, YES! UNQUESTIONABLY, DOCTOR-- DOCTOR--
FEEL FREE TO CALL ME LUCAS, SIR!
MRS. BLAKE--TAKE LUCAS TO THE NEAREST GUEST SUITE!
YES, SIR!
LATER...
"--EMILY," HE SAID, "IF I COULD HAVE ALL THE WOMEN IN THE WORLD... ...YOU'D STILL BE THE ONE I'D WANT TO MASSAGE MY FEET!"
THAT'S MY HUSBAND!
A TRUE ROMANTIC!
MY!
HERE WE ARE, DOCTOR.
PLEASE, CALL ME LUCAS.
CERTAINLY, LUCAS.
AND IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, JUST RING THE BELL.
OH OF COURSE, MRS. BLAKE...
--OR MAY I CALL YOU EMILY?
NOW NOW, LUCAS!
I'M A MARRIED WOMAN, YOU KNOW!

TRUE, BUT A FELLOW CAN DREAM, CAN'T HE?
-giggle-
MY, BUT YOU'RE A RASCAL, LUCAS!
JUST KEEPING IN PRACTICE, MY DEAR!
GOOD EVENING, EMILY.
GOOD EVENING, LUCAS.
CLICK
GOOD EVENING INDEED.
WELL, WELL, OH SUPREME BEING!
YOU DIDN'T THINK I WOULD MAKE IT THIS FAR, DID YOU?
AND SO SOON, TOO!
NOT ONLY THAT, . . .
BUT I'VE GAINED THE CONFIDENCE OF THE MAYOR, NO LESS!
AND SOON, I WILL CALL HIM INTO SERVICE...
TO HELP ME CHAMPION MY AWESOME CAUSE!!
SO WHERE, "OH EXALTED ONE," IS YOUR CHAMPION?
OR HAVEN'T YOU EVEN SET YOUR SIGHTS ON ONE YET?
SLACKER!
SHIVER, OH PRECIOUS "KING"!
FOR YOUR REIGN IS DRAWING TO A CLOSE...
AND MINE IS AT HAND!!

NO! WAIT! DON'T THROW THIS COMIC AWAY IN DISGUST!
WE'RE SORRY WE TRICKED YOU WITH THE NATURE FLICK!
IT'S JUST THAT -- WELL, WE'RE BOUND BY CONTRACT TO SHOW YOU INTERESTING STORIES EACH ISSUE! SNIF!
FORSOOTH! IT'S TRUE!
OH, THAT I HADN'T SIGNED THAT WRETCHED CONTRACT!
THEN WE COULD BORE & CONFUSE OUR READERS TO THEIR HEARTS' CONTENT!
WAIT! MAW! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
A LAWYER? WE'RE SAVED!
WE COULD HIRE A LAWYER!
OOPS! I MEAN: A LAWYER? WE'RE SAVED!
FRIENDS, AS YOU KNOW, LAWYERS ARE COSTLY; SO NOW IS WHEN WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT MORE THAN EVER!
♫ MY COUNTRY 'TIS of THEE...
JUST SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER TO--
ALL RIGHT! THAT'S ENOUGH!
HEY!
WHO ARE YOU?!
♫ SWEET LAND OF LIIIBERTY...
I'M THE COMICOP, AND I'M HERE TO MAKE SURE THAT YOU GUYS GIVE THE READERS THE BOREDOM AND CONFUSION THAT YOU PROMISED THEM!
YOU DON'T SAY...
♫ OF THEE I SING...
AAAAR!
SO I'M JUST GOING TO PUSH YOU BOTH INTO THE CROWD SCENE ON PAGE SIX!
♫ LAND of the PILLGRIMS' PRIDE...
AND YOU'D BETTER MAKE THAT STORY BORING AND CONFUSING BY THE NEXT ISSUE...
OR ELSE!!!

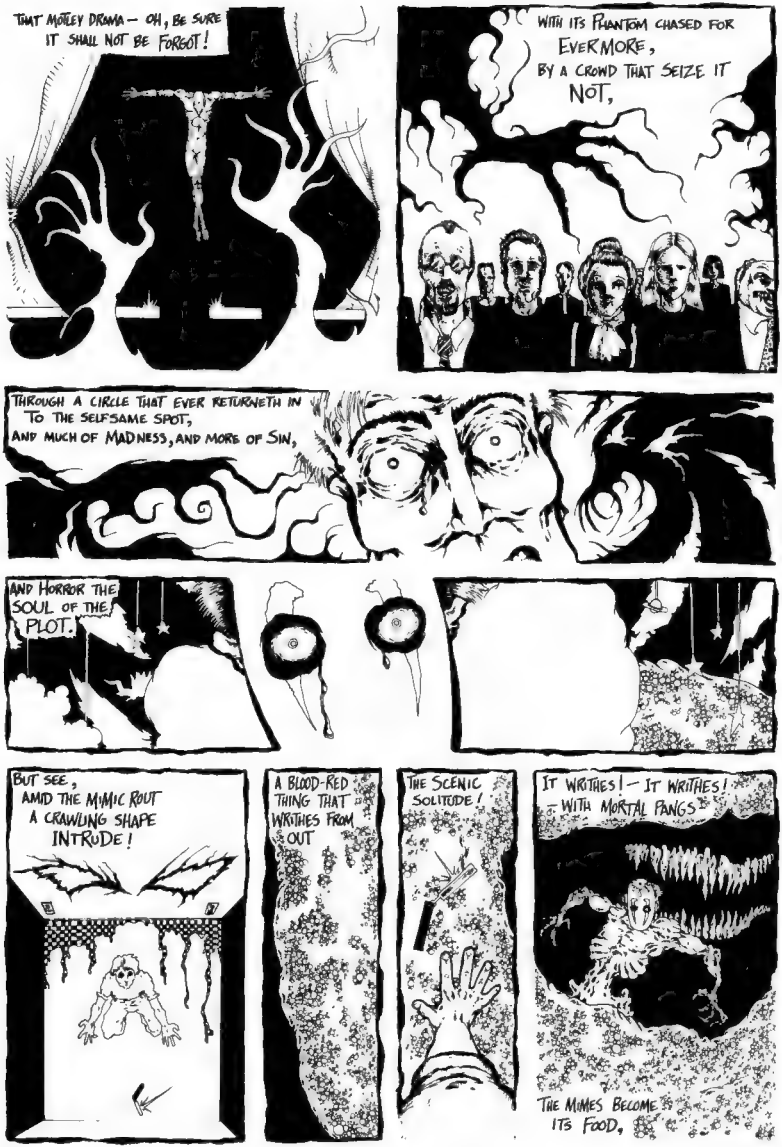
Carla Ellison in Xmas
PRIMO BOOZE
CHOCO-TRAY
THEYRE OK!
mmm! Cats
I open 2 eat choc
TO CARLA @ LOVE CARLA x x x
THIS ONE FOR STEVE FULLERTON
McCREA 24-10-91

YOU CAN'T BEAT CHRISTMAS ON YOUR OWN.
ROAR!
LOADSA SCOFF, A FEW BEERS, AND 'VALLEY OF GWANGI' ON TELLY. NO-ONE AROUND TO SPOIL IT...
...EXCEPT...
BING BONG
WHAT IS IT?
SHEPHERD'S CATERERS, MISS... THE ROAST LAMB SURPRISE.
I'M A VEGETARIAN.
TURNED OUT HE WANTED UPSTAIRS.

AFTER THAT, IT WAS EVERY 10 MINUTES.
HELLO, DEAR, CASPAR WISEMAN. I'VE BROUGHT THE GOLD.
UPSTAIRS.
BALTHAZAR'S THE NAME, FRANKINCENSE THE GAME.
UPSTAIRS.
NOT LATE, AM I?
UPSTAIRS.
EVENTUALLY, I JUST LOST MY RAG!
BING BONG BING BONG
THEN CAME THE FINAL STRAW...
WHERE D'YER WANT THIS HAY, THEN?
I SHUT IT, YOU! I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS!

WILL YOU TURN THAT BLOODY STAR OFF?!?
JESUS CHRIST! IF YOU CAN'T GET A BIT OF PEACE AT CHRISTMAS...
END

THE CONQUEROR WORM
WORDS BY EDGAR ALLAN POE
IMAGES BY BILL D. FOUNTAIN + CAMERON B. BAITY
LO! ? IS A GALA NIGHT WITHIN THE LONESOME LATTER YEARS!
AN ANGEL THRONG, BEWINGED, BEDIGHT IN VEILS, AND DROWNED IN TEARS,
SIT IN A THEATER, TO SEE A PLAY OF HOPES AND FEARS,
WHILE THE ORCHESTRA BREATHES FITFULLY THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES.
MIMES, IN THE FORM OF GOD ON HIGH, MUTTER AND MUMBLE LOW,
AND HITHER AND THITHER FLY— MERE PUPPETS THEY, WHO COME AND GO
AT BIDDING OF VAST SHADOWY THINGS THAT SHIFT THE SCENERY TO + FRO,
FLAPPING FROM OUT THEIR CONDOR WINGS INVISIBLE WOE!


THAT MOTLEY DRAMA — OH, BE SURE IT SHALL NOT BE FORGOT!
WITH ITS PHANTOM CHASED FOR EVERMORE, BY A CROWD THAT SEIZE IT NOT,
THROUGH A CIRCLE THAT EVER RETURNETH IN TO THE SELFSAME SPOT, AND MUCH OF MADNESS, AND MORE OF SIN,
AND HORROR THE SOUL OF THE PLOT.
BUT SEE, AMID THE MIMIC ROUT A CRAWLING SHAPE INTRUDE!
A BLOOD-RED THING THAT WRITHES FROM OUT
THE SCENIC SOLITUDE!
IT WRITHES! — IT WRITHES! — WITH MORTAL PANGS
THE MIMES BECOME ITS FOOD,

AND THE ANGELS SOB AT VERMIN FANGS
IN HUMAN GORE IMBUED.
OUT-OUT ARE THE LIGHTS-OUT ALL!
AND, OVER EACH QUIVERING FORM,
THE CURTAIN, A FUNERAL PALL,
COMES DOWN WITH THE RUSH OF A STORM.
AND THE ANGELS, ALL PALLID AND A WAN, UPRISING, UNVEILING, AFFIRM
THAT THE PLAY IS THE TRAGEDY "MAN,"
AND ITS HERO
THE CONQUEROR WORM.

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LETTERS

Internet: 72164.1134@CompuServe P.O. Box 893 Acworth,GA 30101

I'm running a bit late with this month's letter column, so I won't be able to answer any of the letters this month. Sorry. I'll try to be more caught up by next month. Promise.

Edward Douglas
76453,767@compuserve.com

Hey, Joe!

Just got the last two issues of NEGATIVE BURN, so as usual, here are a few comments:

Nice Frank Quitely cover on #38 although I was a bit disappointed that there was no interior artwork from him; I loved his work on FLEX MENTALLO. I didn't think much of the first chapter of "The Brutalizers", which seemed like another Road Warriors/ Western type story which I've read far too many times already.

The reference to "Little Nemo in Slumberland" in the "Mr. Mamoulian" strip, "Twittering", was pretty obvious, but I really didn't know what this was supposed to be about otherwise.

Man, it's great to see "Suzy Romaine" back in the pages of NEGATIVE BURN and the restaurant espionage aspect of this story was pretty original. I liked the mix of action and humor quite a bit, and this really was well done in all regards. I especially like Slampyak's artwork as his layouts really drove this story along at a great pace. I hope that he'll go back to do more stuff like this now that he's free from Big Entertainment.

Hey! I remember WALK THROUGH OCTOBER! And it's great to see more of Matt Smith's series even if I don't remember what the first issue of that mini was about. Because of this, I couldn't really figure out who these characters were or what the significance of this meeting was. So where does this fall into the story and will we ever see more? I always enjoy Gaydos' artwork, though... although I never really noticed the similarity between his art and Smith's until now.

"Boredom" seems a bit too close to my own lifestyle and TV viewing habits but was mildly amusing nonetheless.

Oh, this is a pleasant surprise. I wasn't expecting a KINGDOM OF THE WICKED tie-in; guess I should read the solicitations closer, huh? Anyway, like that fantastic new series, this story was truly wonderful with beautiful art by D'Israeli accompanying Edginton's vivid fairy tale story. This really is terrific work and makes me long for the second issue of that series even more. And it makes for a hard act to follow, too.

So boy, do I feel sorry to see that the next story is by my pal, Sean McKeever. Actually, "Making a Mark" is okay. I hadn't read the whole story but I like the subject matter and the writing more than Sean's last NB offering, "Targets". Still, the ending of this story was a bit predictable, and the art by Jon Haward was a bit erratic. At it's best, it looked like the work of Scott McDaniel, but it was a bit too hard to follow some of what was going on. Sadly, I didn't think that the art and writing went together very well.

Ha! Another hilarious "Mr. Murray" strip by Ian Carney and Dave Taylor! I love those strange little guys and this was just as good as the last one!

Jason Thompson's "Ignorant Layman" looks like it might be kinda fun. "The World's Most Incompetent Superhero", huh? Anyway, this wasn't as good as I had hoped. It tries to be quirky like FLAMING CARROT but it really seems like Thompson tries a bit too hard, and it just doesn't work. The writing seemed really stiff and his art looked a bit like that of Gary Millidge, but had some of the same problems that bother me about the art in STRANGEHAVEN. (And this story is also continued in the next issue? Oy....)

Oh, joy! A "Tresspassers" mystery! I've been a fan of Zabel and Dumm's work since last year's Mid-Ohio Con and this short story had the same sort of tension and unexpected twists as their past work. I really love Ray and Finn and I was glad to see this story to tie me over to the next issue.

Gee, is it just me that thinks that running another cartoon called "No Regrets" so shortly after Jeff Nicholson's serial ended is a bit confusing? Still, this is the deadly comedy duo of Pauls Erickson and Fricke, so this should be fun! And sure enough, this was even more bizarre than their last collaboration although not as out-and-out funny.

"Mommy's Boy" was another one of those poignant and thought-provoking shorts that I usually read and then don't think about ever again. It was well-written but there really wasn't enough plot for it to keep my interest.

Overall, a decent issue...not one of the best, but plenty of stories to keep me entertained. My favorite story was the "Kingdom of the Wicked" short and I also liked the "Suzy Romaine" story a lot.

Olav Beemer
Zeist, The Netherlands

Dear Joe,

A little later than usual, but NEGATIVE BURN #38 nevertheless found its way into my comic book collection. With twelve different features to contend with, let's get right down to my comment on those short stories without any further ado.

"The Brutalizers" was nice, for a first chapter in this story, but I'm afraid it didn't do all that much for me. Especially not because in the six presented pages, the creators had very little of real substance to offer. I'm just going to have to wait and see where this one will be going next issue, I guess.

"Mr. Mamoulian," on the other hand, was fabulously funny once again. I don't know how Brian Bolland pulls it off, but the past several installments have only been getting funnier and better. The installment at hand here really was a gem in terms of absurd humor and terrific timing.

"Suzi Romaine" was good old-fashioned fun in an exciting package. I've liked Ted Slampyak's artwork since I first saw it some two years ago and this peek at some of his older work really has made me wonder whatever has happened to him since his last work for Tekno Comix. Perhaps it would be a nice idea to invite him back to these pages, doing a couple of short stories?

As for the next story in this issue, "Walk Through October" was a bit too weird for my tastes. A lot of dark foreboding, menacing harbingers of what's to come– yet the story itself was some what shallow. Excellent Michael Gaydos art, though.

"Boredom" was a funny two-page experience, but from the looks of it, this piece of work didn't took long to come into being. After all, Andy Kuhn only had to draw three different panels, copy the first one and fill in some text balloons.

Fortunately, "Kingdom of the Wicked" obviously took a lot more efforts from its creators Ian Edginton and D'Israeli. This certainly was a terrifyingly intriguing tale which kept me on the edge of my seat from start to finish. Good story-telling, nice artwork. Yes, I might want to take a look at that regular KINGDOM OF THE WICKED series some day.

"Making a Mark" turned out to be a thrilling and exciting piece of work. It fit in perfectly with the overall mood of the issue, which to me seems a little darker and more menacing than usual, and the artwork by Jon Haward looks extremely promising to me.

The same goes for "Mr. Murray." Elegant, simple yet entertaining work which I'll always appreciate. Too bad this tale couldn't have been included in the Christmas issue of NEGATIVE BURN, for that would have made it quite appropriate to boot.

"The Ignorant Layman" shows promise as well, but this first chapter didn't quite convince me yet. There were some nice elements about it, mostly the artwork, but the story-telling seems a bit patchy to me.

"The Man on the Roof," on the other hand, showed what it takes to tell a rather fantastic story in a relatively small amount of pages. The basic idea of this tale was very good, the art might need some work, but overall, I have really enjoyed this presentation by Joe Zabel and Gary Dumm.

Finally, "No Regrets" and "Mommy's Boy" weren't particularly my cup of tea. Both were nice and intriguing reads, but the first tale could have been a little more to the point while the latter tale ended up being somewhat predictable.

Overall, though, NEGATIVE BURN #38 has turned out to be an entertaining issue. I especially liked the way most of the featured stories seemed to share a link in terms of theme and atmosphere. Hmm, now that I think of it, a theme issue of NEGATIVE BURN indeed does sound like something pretty darn interesting. Any chance of that?

Andrew M. Ford
creator of RIB
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Joe,

Finally got around to writing a "review" of NB #38. Let's get right to!

This issue started off kinda weak with "The Brutalizers." Although the story wasn't totally without merit, the artwork was. In black and white sequential art, contrast is the name of the game; this story had none. It almost looked as if the inker just traced over the pencils, without adding any depth or mood to the page. Oh well, being someone who has seen a fair share of marginal artwork saved by a good story, I'll have to wait and see how this one ends, before totally counting it out.

"Mr. Mamoulian" is starting to really lose my interest. I probably shouldn't say that, though, for I'll probably love next issue's installment. That's how this one seems to have always worked for me. I guess I'm just looking for a bit more consistency from this series as awhole.

I was glad to see Ted Slampyak back in the pages of NB. Slampyak's dialog is really classic, in that it reminds me of comics that I read while growing up. While being kinda cheesy sounding in places, it really works overall. I guess it's the over-the-top approach that does it. This is a good lesson for aspiring writers. If you are gonna have unreal, comic-booky dialog in your story, make sure you use that same dialog all throughout the piece. I hope to see a lot more from this truly talented and entertaining creator.

"Walk Through October" was really intriguing. The art was nice and moody, and the story was great. I love it when writers take things such as angels, and make them mortal (if only in appearance), forcing them to spend some time living as humans. This gives the reader a chance to really connect and relate to something that they might not

initially. I think more could have been done with this piece, but it was good nonetheless.

"Boredom," while a bit light, was terrifically funny, and probably more on the money than most of us would like to believe. If this is what the average American is truly like, we are in some serious trouble.

This installment of "Kingdom of the Wicked"was very interesting; so much so in fact that it compelled me to go out and pick up a copy of the first full-length comic by the same name. What a wonderfully creepy tale. Man, that ending hit me hard...very good stuff!

"Making the Mark" seemed like the usual vampire fare. I know I've complained about this before, but if someone is gonna take a shot at doing a vampire story, it's gotta be more original (and have more to it) than this one.

You should have saved this new installment of "Mr. Murray" for your December issue. I was already smiling, as I began to read this one-pager, but I couldn't help laughing out loud when I read the line, "I Dropped my match and it's ignited her junk mail!!" What a hoot! I look forward to many more installments of this fine strip.

"The Ignorant Layman" was kinda weird, but cool. I can't say it was my favorite story this issue, but I am curious as to where exactly this is all headed.

"The Man on the Roof" was great, but heck, this is the masterful team of Zabel and Dumm we're talking about here. I already enjoy their self-published title (TRESSPASSERS), so it's nice to see these little "shorts" in NB from time to time. Anymore on the schedule at this time?

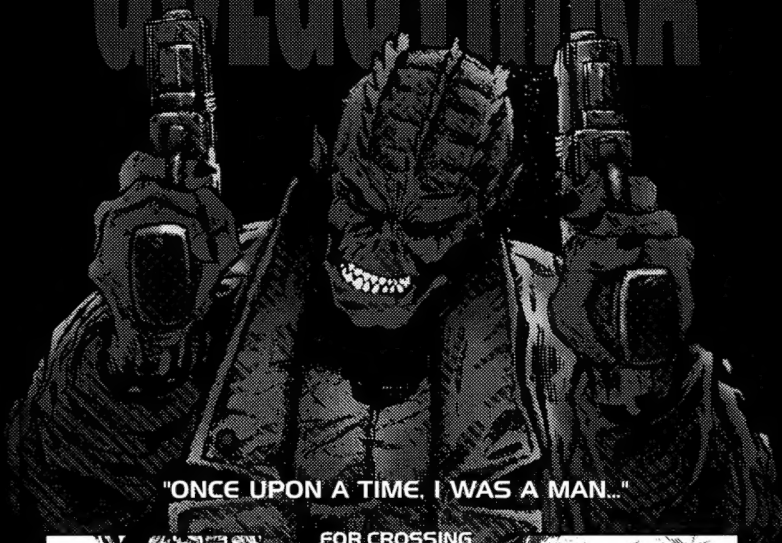
"No Regrets" was an interesting trip through what we think will happen, as oppose to what actually does. I give this one a thumbs up for originality alone.

"Mommy's Boy": I was really stunned by this one's ending. For only being a two-pager, this one carried quite a wallop. You really went out with a bang this issue. Well done.

Well, guess that's it for now. You keep putting issues out like this one, and I'll keep buying (and, more importantly, reading) them.

From the haunting mind of JOHN BERGIN

GOLGOTHIKA



"ONCE UPON A TIME, I WAS A MAN..."

FOR CROSSING WERNER HERZOG, THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL LEADER, HELMUT'S BRAIN WAS DOWNLOADED INTO THE VAT-GROWN BODY OF A GREEN FOUR-FOOT-TALL GARGOYLE. NOW HE MUST CRAWL OUT OF "HELL" AND SAVE THE WOMAN HE LOVES AND EXACT REVENGE ON THE MAN WHO RIPPED HIS LIFE TO SHREDS.

ISSUE TWO ON SALE JANUARY 1997

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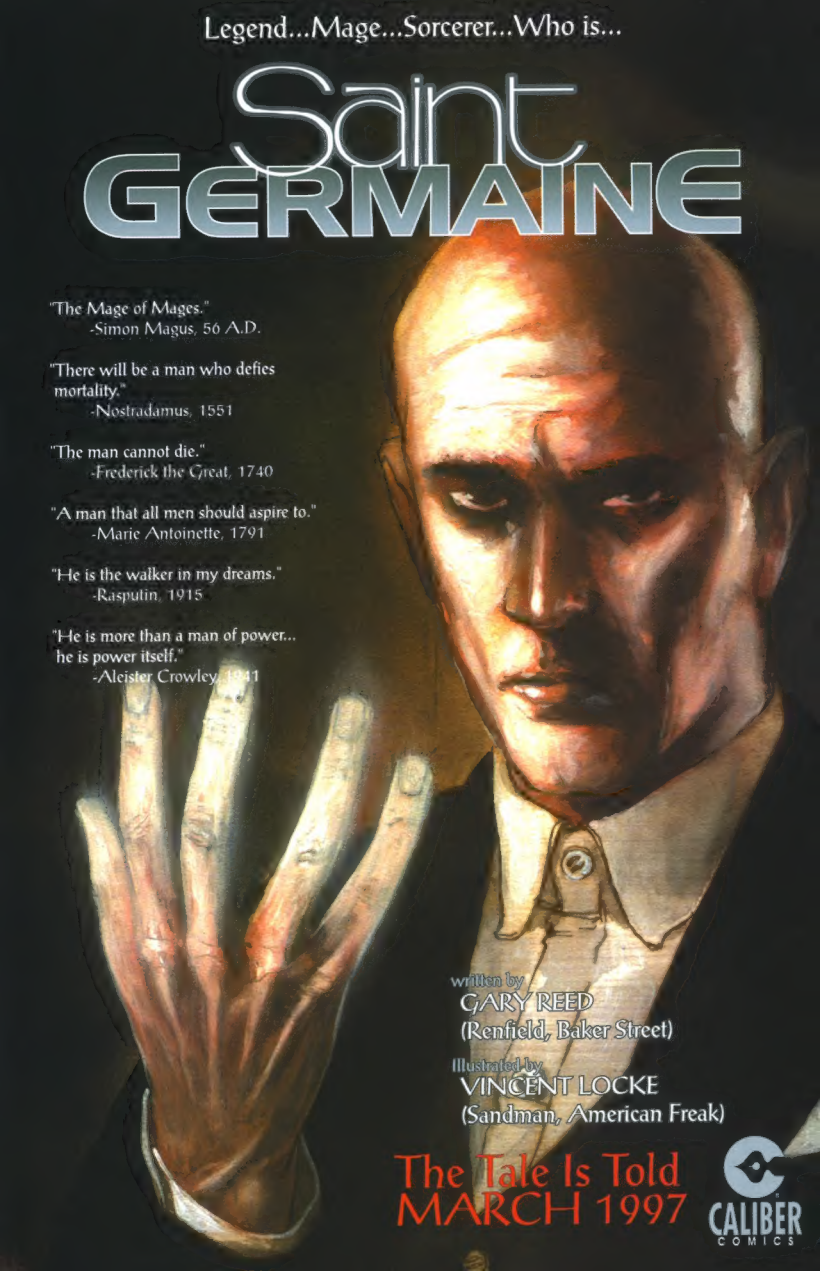
-Marie Antoinette, 1791

"He is the walker in my dreams."
-Rasputin, 1915

"He is more than a man of power... he is power itself."
-Aleister Crowley, 1941



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The Tale Is Told
MARCH 1997

CALIBER COMICS